

Royal Mail International Update

November 2019

This update, about incidents which have affected international mail services throughout November, was issued by Royal Mail Customer Services on Thursday 12 December 2019.

Information about issues currently affecting the movement of international mail, including international bank holidays, can be found at: www.royalmail.com/internationalupdates.

Africa

Libya

Start date: 16 July 2014

End date: Ongoing

Mail services to Libya are currently suspended until further notice.

South Africa

Start date: 1 October 2017

End date: Ongoing

Very poor service has been observed for mail into South Africa. South Africa Post Office has advised this is due to abnormally high volumes of mail.

This has created bottlenecks in their processing locations due to space constraints and processing capacity. The communicated recovery plan expected at the end of October does not look to have resolved the issues and with the peak Christmas volumes, this is likely to increase delays. Delays are approximately 35 days.

Asia

Hong Kong

Start date: 8 November 2019

End date: 25 November 2019

Public events, including road blocks resulted in disruption to mail services in major parts of Hong Kong. This seriously affected inbound and outbound mail services.



Royal Mail International Update – November

Japan

Start date: October 2019

End date: 19 November 2019

Airmail traffic going through a local airport had been experiencing delays since October 2019. This was due to continuously increasing inbound volumes of mail causing serious congestion at the airport mail handling facility, with deliveries delayed up to 24 hours. Normal service resumed on November 19.

Malaysia

Start date: 20 October 2019

End date: 30 November 2019

Malaysian Post has informed us they have been experiencing IT service disruptions since Sunday 20 October 2019 because of an internal system shutdown. As a result, the processing and delivery of inbound and outbound international mail will be delayed.

Syria

Start date: 6 December 2012

End date: Ongoing

Mail services to Syria are currently suspended until further notice.

Australasia

No incidents reported.

Europe

European Services

Start date: 28 November 2019

End date: 29 November 2019

French lorry drivers and the National Road Transport Organisation has announced a roadblock at the French-Belgian Border on 28 November 2019 to protest the French Government's decision to reduce tax relief on commercial diesel fuel. As a result, this affected UK outbound mail between France and the Belgian border, and mail transiting through Belgium with delays of up to 24 hours

Finland

Start date: 11 November 2019

End date: 24 November 2019

The Finnish Post and Logistics Union (PAU) took strike action in November, starting Monday 11 November and ended on Sunday 24 November. Delays to mail services were expected during and immediately after the strike, while any backlog was cleared.

Italy

Start date: 1 February 2017

End date: Ongoing

We have become aware of processing delays on all inbound international traffic arriving in Italy.

To reflect the current transit times, we are temporarily extending our delivery aims as follows:

Untracked products: 6-8 working days; Tracked products: 4-6 working days and Tracked and Signed For products: 5-7 working days.

Royal Mail International Update – November

Norway

Start date: 1 August 2018

End date: Ongoing

Norwegian Post has confirmed their International Mail Hub due is continuing to experience delays following modernisation.

Although there have been improvements, a proportion of Tracked mail is still experiencing delays daily. Norwegian Post has confirmed further enhancement activities are planned for processing improvements.

Spain

Start date: 29 November 2019

End date: 14 December 2019

The Climate Change Summit took place close to Barajas Airport and Correos HQ. Protests were expected close to the event and also in the financial and business districts of Madrid, with a high security and police presence across the city. In addition, public transport workers announced strike action during the summit. Delivery operations were likely to be disrupted as a result, in the districts affected by the protests.

Sweden

Start date: November 2017

End date: Ongoing

Delivery scanning of 'Tracked' has improved in recent months, however, it still isn't where it's expected to be and we'd recommend customers use Tracked & Signed services to Sweden for more reliable tracking information.

Ukraine (Crimea & Sevastapol)

Start date: 18 March 2014

End date: Ongoing

Mail services to Crimea and Sevastapol are suspended until further notice.

Latin America & Caribbean

Brazil

Start date: 16 October 2017

End date: Ongoing

We've been advised that there are currently delays with mail into Brazil. We believe this may be due to industrial action, however this is yet to be confirmed. However, what we can say is that any mail posted in the last 5-7 days could be in a backlog and any mail affected may experience at least a 10-day delay from posting to delivery.

We are taking steps to re-route where possible and expect any new postings from the end of this week to be clear of the backlog, but could still be subject to some delay in delivery of 3 days or more.

Chile

Start date: 20 October 2019

End date: 18 November 2019

Following Social and Political there were delays in the processing and delivery of both inbound and outbound mail.

Royal Mail International Update – November

Nicaragua

Start date: 22 November 2019

End date: Ongoing

Due to operational difficulties, our carrier has temporarily suspended the transportation of mail to Nicaragua, but hope to resume soon. Mail and parcels will be held until resumption of services. As a result, delivery delays can be expected.

Venezuela

Start date: 4 July 2017

End date: Ongoing

The local situation has disrupted mail flows into Venezuela and our supplier has had to stop delivering mail into Venezuela. As a result, we can no longer accept any mail for Venezuela, any mail on hand will be returned to sender.

Middle East

Israel

Start date: 12 November 2019

End date: 19 November

Israeli Post has notified us mail deliveries and collections (letter-post, parcels and EMS items) in the south and central regions of Israel have experienced interruptions due to security situations. As a result, some items due for delivery in these areas may be delayed. There is no indication on the duration of any delay at present, we'll update this page when more information become available.

Lebanon

Start date: 20 October 2019

End date: 1 November 2019

Following evening protests and demonstrations in various cities across Lebanon, resulting in road blocks, there were no mail services. Normal service resumed on the 1 November.

Lebanon

Start date: 13 November 2019

End date: 15 November 2019

All mail services were suspended again, following demonstrations and road blocks in various cities across Lebanon. Services were restored from the 15 November.

Yemen

Start date: 27 March 2015

End date: Ongoing

Mail services to Yemen are currently suspended until further notice.

Royal Mail International Update – November

North America (USA & Canada)

Canada

Start date: 9 October 2017

End date: Ongoing

What's the issue?

Canada Post are experiencing delays to delivery services due to high volumes of incoming mail. Delivery aims for Royal Mail services for Canada are normally 5-7 working day, however, International Standard and International Tracked & Signed are severely delayed, taking 3-4 weeks to be delivered.

What alternative is there?

If you have been posting using our Royal Mail 'Tracked and Signed service', we highly recommend you use our 'Tracked service' option which is providing much speedier processing and delivery times. Simply select the correct service and label. If you are not set up on our Tracked service, please talk to your usual Royal Mail contact who will help you with the next steps. Finally, for our Customers using the Post Office to send your items, simply ask for a "Tracked service" at the counter.

A note about Customs in Canada

Whilst Customs clearing processing times are totally outside our control, it is worth remembering that Canada is one the countries with the lowest de-minimis of 20 Canadian Dollars (circa £11). This means that any goods equal or above that value will systematically go through a clearance process thus creating additional delays. Most of what our customers send is under DDU (Delivered Duty Unpaid) meaning that the recipient is responsible to pay any duty or taxes. Read more on our country guide page.royalmail.com/canada, thank you.

Other

Ascension Islands/Saint Helena

Start date: 6 February 2018

End date: Ongoing

Air transportation to the Ascension Islands/St Helena is currently reduced due to ongoing runway work. Unfortunately, given the location of the countries, there is no viable alternative which would arrive any earlier. Although, customers can continue to send mail there will be significant delays in the delivery of all products. Please note: Mail to the Falkland Island is not affected.

Help and advice

More information about Royal Mail's international products and services is available on our royalmail.com/international/pages. Alternatively, if you're a business customer you can contact your usual Royal Mail service contact or call our dedicated Business Centre on 08457 950950. If you're a residential customer, you'll need to call 03457 740740.

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